Questions and Answers from the VITA Executive Dialogue Sessions
June 9 – 12, 2003

Finance & Procurement

Q. The Appropriation Act deducts from each agency a share of the projected cost savings from VITA initiatives of $37.4 million in FY 2004. Since the scope and pace of consolidation has changed and these savings will not be realized immediately, how will agencies make up the difference in funds?

A. The legislature designated $14 million out of the $37.4 million for VITA's start-up costs. For small and medium agencies, VITA is committed to making up their share of the projected FY 2004 savings from the $14 million designated for VITA's start-up costs. The Secretaries of Technology and Finance continue to work with Governor's Office to arrive at an equitable solution for large agencies.

Q. How will agencies pay for VITA services? What about agencies that receive federal funds?

A. Following best business practice, agencies will be billed on a monthly basis for the vast majority of VITA services. This approach is consistent with federally-accepted practices for use of federal funds for such purposes. In some cases, such as personnel transferred to VITA's major project oversight function, funds will be transferred at the time such positions transition to VITA.

Q. If my agency staff are transferred to VITA and then you are going to bill me for services, are we paying for services twice?

A. Absolutely not! VITA will either receive funds up front for personnel transfers **or** your agency will be billed for services as they are used, but not both.

Q. Will there be some type of process between VITA and the agencies to determine agencies' financial obligations to VITA? Will this be done in time for the biennium budget process?

A. Absolutely. This is true in the financial area as well as in other areas. VITA leadership was announced on July 8th and will be in place within several weeks. Then they will begin this process of working through these issues with agencies in time for the biennium budget process.

Q. What if an agency cannot afford to pay for VITA services?

A. Agencies will be billed at the cost of providing services, and the VITA model looks at sharing costs across the enterprise. VITA will work with DPB to address funding in the event agencies do not have adequate funding to cover required services.

Q. How will IT-related procurement be handled between now and the time the MOAs are signed?

A. Procurement during the interim period will be handled much in the same way it has been handled by DIT until now. VITA will have procurement authority for IT-related products and services as of July 1 (currently held by DIT). For more information about procurement, visit **http://www.proreform.virginia.gov**.

Human Resources & Performance Management

Q. My AITR has been mapped to VITA. Who should take on the AITR responsibilities?

A. The most important attribute of an AITR is to have a solid understanding of the agency's business requirements. The AITR does not necessarily need a technical background, and should have access to agency senior management and the authority to assign agency resources. The AITR should have the authority to make commitments with financial impact. You will want to designate your new AITR before your agency consolidates and your MOA takes effect. That way your current AITR can help your new AITR learn the ropes.

Q. How does VITA plan on communicating with employees regarding their transition to VITA?

A. Communications to employees should occur on or around July 1, and should be a collaborative effort between your agency and VITA. We want to work with agencies to resolve any issues around employee notifications as soon as possible. We will notify Agency heads and provide guidance to allow notification of employees by agency heads directly. We want to ensure that employees see they are valued, that we hear them, and understand their concerns.

Q. Our biggest concern is that employees currently have a high level of autonomy and job satisfaction. Employees are fearful of the levels of approval they will need in the future, and wonder where they will fit in.

A. Customer service and satisfaction are built into the culture of VITA. VITA is committed to working with employees, listening to them, and engaging them in the process of building the new VITA organization.

Q. If my agency will be having meetings with employees, will someone from VITA come and address the group?

A. Yes, depending on availability. We have met with other groups, usually by Secretariat, and would be happy to take invitations. We encourage IT employees to attend the Town Hall sessions we will hold later this summer and would also invite other group meetings (for example, by Secretariat). We will certainly make every effort to honor invitations, depending on the volume and scheduling of such requests.

Q. Will you have meetings for IT employees?

A. Yes. Town Hall sessions are being planned for late July for all IT employees. The meetings are planned after the mapping notification information has been compiled and disseminated to employees. The invitation for these events will probably be sent during

the first two weeks of July. We will accommodate remote viewing of at least one of the sessions for IT employees outside of Richmond.

Q. Who will supervise, provide performance reviews, and fill out timesheets for VITA employees located in my agency?

A. During the interim, employees continue to report as they do now. Once the MOA between VITA and your agency is signed, a VITA manager will oversee the employees assigned to your agency. In large agencies, we anticipate the manager will reside in that location. For smaller agencies, there may be an individual who oversees groups of employees in several agencies, by Secretariat.

Q. There is a perception that future conflicts may arise when an employee feels he/she is "serving two masters." How will this be handled?

A. Once the MOA is signed, employees located in agencies will report to their VITA manager, and the reporting hierarchy should be clear at that time. However, even though that is the policy, we all know that deep relationships and changes in reporting structure may occasionally create challenges. The VITA manager referred to above will be able to help resolve issues and champion the new reporting hierarchy--so there will be someone the employee can go to for assistance, if he/she feels 'stuck in the middle.' Furthermore, VITA support teams will be responsible for maintaining the service levels specified in the MOA, thereby providing one common set of standards by which both VITA and the agency will judge performance.

Q. Will agencies have input into performance evaluations of VITA employees assigned to them?

A. Yes. These processes have not been fully defined, and we are currently considering options for performance reviews, such as 360 degree reviews where individuals are rated by their supervisors and by people who report to them.

Q. How will a person who is not on-site be able to perform evaluations?

A. The VITA managers responsible for the individuals located in your agency will constantly be in touch and available to the employees they supervise. They will also be on-site on a regular basis.

Q. Who approves leave for VITA employees located at my agency?

A. Their VITA manager. The VITA manager is responsible for ensuring and monitoring service continuity.

Q. We have 10 people today who have been mapped to VITA – will we have these 10 VITA staff supporting us in the future?

A. Initially, we expect the support to remain where it is: "same places, same faces." As VITA achieves operational efficiencies, VITA staff may be reassigned and redeployed in

an effort to use our state resources most effectively *and* to give our state IT employees the opportunity to be challenged with new experiences. Our commitment will be to meet the service levels agreed upon in your MOA and to notify your agency in advance of any reassignments.

Q. Should we fill vacant positions between now and when we transition to VITA?

A. Agencies transitioning to VITA in the next six months (Small Agencies) should not fill positions. VITA is committed to working with Small Agencies to address vacancies. Those agencies with longer timeframes to transition (Medium and Large Agencies) should continue to use existing processes and procedures to post and fill positions. Any positions filled during the transition period will require approval from the Secretary of Technology, as there may be options for VITA to provide the needed support in the interim.

Q. How will employee benefits be handled?

A. VITA will administer all benefits for VITA employees, including those who are assigned to your agency. We are employing a "when in Rome" approach to policies so that VITA employees can conform to the culture of the agencies in which they work and/or are physically located. HR Policies, including benefit policies, are being developed and posted on the VITA intranet and copies will be made available to you as well when we begin the MOA process.

Q. Will salaries be transferred with MEL?

A. Salary obligations will be transferred with their associated positions. As noted in other answers, VITA is using an internal service fund model for services wherever possible, meaning most services will be billed for as they are used.

Q. How will knowledge transfer be handled? How will communications between the technology personnel servicing an agency and the agency be maintained?

We have a tiered approach to maintaining communications and information transfer between agencies and VITA personnel. VITA personnel will work largely on-site with the agency they support. They will be supported by a Service Level Manager who is assigned to one or more agencies to champion the service delivery and overall relationship, at an agency level, between VITA and the agency. An Enterprise Service Directory assigned to each Secretariat will champion the relationship between agencies and VITA at a Secretariat level. And finally a Central (Customer) Service Desk will be available to all agencies served by VITA. Your AITR will play a key role in making sure that your needs are clearly communicated to these entities as appropriate.

Infrastructure & Hardware

Q. What is the mechanism for transferring property (e.g., hardware, servers, etc.) from my agency to VITA?

A. Formal transfer of such property is necessary to fulfill the intent of the VITA legislation. Property that has fully depreciated in value can be transferred via inclusion in the MOA. Assuming the asset can be redeployed by VITA, property with residual value can be transferred in like fashion, with the providing agency receiving appropriate credit for such value.

Q. We have specialized equipment that we think is unique to our agency. Do the equipment and the people responsible for supporting it stay with us or go to VITA?

A. As noted at the May 5th Agency Heads meeting, exceptions may be made for IT infrastructure and the staff who supports it that is unique to your agency and its mission (such as specialized equipment supporting fingerprinting or forensic laboratory analysis). Such exceptions must be mutually agreed to by the Secretary of Technology and the Secretary of the proponent agency. If you have a candidate for such an exception and have not already notified the Due Diligence Team, please do so immediately.

Q. Is VITA planning to build new data centers or refurbish existing sites?

A. VITA will be working with outside experts in data center facility design to determine what is best for the Commonwealth. We expect to have more specific plans in the Fall of 2003.

Q. Does current infrastructure support the bandwidth required?

A. Part of the technical assessment VITA will perform prior to signing the MOA with your agency will look at each agency's systems and networks. The plan for implementing tools on site will initially go down to the server level. If a need exists to bring a network up to a minimum standard, that will be discussed as part of the transition.

Q. If VITA's moving to a common platform requires us to rewrite applications, who pays for the rewrite?

A. Initially, VITA's commitment is to support existing platforms. Over time, many economies will be enjoyed by reducing the wide variety of platforms currently in use. Such transitions will have to be planned with the various lifecycles of the supported applications in mind as well as the cost of moving such applications to more standardized platforms in comparison to the benefits. A component of that planning will need to be how those costs and benefits are equitably allocated among VITA and the affected agencies.

VITA Services

Q. Will desktops and associated funding and support be transferred to VITA? Will additional funding be taken from my agency to account for a "refresh" cycle?

A. VITA will be responsible for all desktops and their support. Agencies will be charged a desktop support fee for such services, which will include refreshing hardware and software on a cycle based on business needs.

Q. Will security continue to be an agency function?

A. Consistent with current state IT policy, agency heads will be responsible for assuring the overall security of their information assets, including business continuity planning. VITA will play a role in supporting agency heads security responsibilities as they pertain to the infrastructure that VITA supplies for the agency. Current agency IT staff who perform predominantly IT security functions have been mapped to VITA's Security Services Directorate. Providing comprehensive, enterprise-wide IT security will be an early priority for VITA.

Q. Do you have a plan for back-up and disaster recovery?

A. We are currently exploring several possibilities, including multiple data centers, and developing statewide contingency plans. Eventually we would like to move to a statewide disaster recovery process.

Q. Who will pick up the services currently provided by DIT during the interim period between June 30th and agency consolidation dates?

A. All Department of Information Technology (DIT), Department of Technology Planning (DTP), and Virginia Information Providers Network (VIPNet) Authority contracts will roll over to VITA on July 1, 2003. As such, VITA will continue providing the services of DIT, DTP, and VIPNet Authority.

Q. For various business reasons, my agency decided not to use remote monitoring of all desktops. If such monitoring is a VITA best practice, will we have a say in whether it is applied to our agency?

A. If VITA is to meet its service level commitments for your desktop and supporting network, it will be necessary to know what is on the network and how it is operating at all times. If an agency has concerns about how such monitoring might impact other business decisions, those concerns should be discussed at the time the MOA is being developed with your agency.

Q. How will the transitioning of major projects be handled?

A. Major projects currently in progress will be addressed so as to minimize any disruptions during the transition process. Our approach is to make as smooth a transition as possible. Agencies should continue with their existing planning processes. During the interim, VITA will be available to provide input where appropriate. New project proposals will be considered by the Information Technology Investment Board once it is established.

Q. How will the transfer of licenses be handled?

A. Licenses for in-scope software will transfer to VITA in the same manner as hardware. Initially, VITA will support your existing services including software licenses. Software licenses and maintenance will be identified during the transition process. Over the long term, VITA will establish relationships with business partners to negotiate lower rates for software licenses and maintenance.

Q. Is there any way VITA can take responsibility for applications in my agency?

A. Yes. VITA is open to such discussions.

Q. How will existing vendor contracts be handled?

A. VITA will inherit any service contracts associated with inherited infrastructure.

Q. How will seat management be handled in the new organization?

A. VITA will inherit all current seat management contracts. Further use of seat management will be addressed at a later date.

Q. Regarding in-house databases, will agencies have control over what gets developed and when?

A. Applications are remaining in-house. Agencies will continue to control them and develop them as needed. VITA will manage the database software residing on the servers.

Q. How will language translations on the Web be handled?

A. In general, Web content is not in scope to VITA. If agencies want to manage and contract for these services, they can do so. If agencies would like to pursue this option as a service offering of VITA, VITA will investigate alternatives based upon individual inquiries from agencies.

Due Diligence & Memorandum of Agreement

Q. There are some aspects of the MOA that do not apply to my agency and some items that are specific to my agency that are not in the MOA template. Can we modify the MOA?

A. One of the primary purposes of the MOA is to provide a standard of service selection and availability that agencies can rely on to be provided on a consistent basis. Within that context, the MOA includes a section for mutually acceptable exclusions and special notations to capture items specific to your agency.

Q. Why are agency CIOs being mapped to VITA?

A. Not all individuals who are referred to as "CIO" have been mapped to VITA. In fact "CIO" is not a formal role title and does not appear in the state employee classification system. It is informally used for individuals with a wide variety of responsibilities. As such, there is little consistency across the Commonwealth in how the term is applied. Regardless of the many ways that we have used the working title "CIO", we are bringing to VITA those people who have traditionally been responsible for strategic direction, setting policies and standards, and developing architecture. This role will be filled by an enterprise CIO designated by the Information Technology Investment Board.

A number of individuals who are currently referred to as CIOs have been mapped to VITA. This mapping, however, was based upon their qualifications to serve as VITA on-site Service Level Directors. VITA Service Level Directors will manage and direct support of IT infrastructure as VITA's on-site lead and single point-of-contact in serving the agency (VITA's counterpart to the AITR).

Q. The due diligence personnel information we sent you is accurate now, but we are not scheduled to transition for a long time. What happens when there are changes?

A. Nothing in the due diligence submission is set in stone until the MOA between your agency and VITA is signed. You will receive a final update of your due diligence data at the time of our MOA discussions. We are also working with DHRM to explore means by which they can notify us of any changes in the interim.

Q. How will fractional MEL positions be handled?

A. Some individuals in an agency perform both VITA and non-VITA functions. As such, there may be "fractions" of people due to VITA. Your agency will meet the FTE due VITA in two steps. First, any employees performing 60% or more in-scope VITA functions are counted against your requirement. Any remaining requirement may be reduced by transferring additional employees to VITA. Since employees are transferred as whole units (excepting P-14s or contractors), but the FTE Due VITA calculation may return a fraction, residual FTE (or MEL) often results. In these cases, your agency will

make a recommendation based upon the best interests of your agency, VITA, and the employee. Any employee meeting the 30% in-scope VITA activities level may be considered as part of these recommendations. Example: Your agency owes VITA 5.42 FTE. Three employees meet the 60% threshold, leaving 2.42 FTEs remaining. You then decide to send two additional employees who meet the minimum 30% in-scope activities threshold, reducing the gap to .42 FTE. Upon review of your agency, you decide that all remaining employees should stay with the agency. The residual .42 MEL and related funding will be credited to VITA.

Q. Some due diligence categories were split 50/50 between my agency and VITA. I believe the split in my agency is actually a different percentage—can the split be changed?

A. The Due Diligence categories were established last Fall, well in advance of the Legislature's decision to divide IT responsibilities between VITA and line agencies. As a result, there were four out of nineteen Due Diligence personnel categories (CIO/CTO, Plan/Manage, IT Admin. Support, and IT Support/Other) that needed to be split between agency and VITA functions. Based on the division of the other categories between VITA and agency functions, these four categories could have logically been divided closer to 2/3 VITA and 1/3 agency. However, in the interest of expediting an equitable approach to this division, the Transition Office decided to apply the 50/50 split. It is important that the division of all positions between VITA and the agencies be recognized as being applied in an equitable manner. Therefore, it is the intent of the VITA Transition Office to maintain the 50/50 split for that purpose. However, if an agency can demonstrate that split causes significant harm, it should be brought to the attention of the VITA Transition Office.

Q. Why were some of my employees listed as "Unassigned" in the Due Diligence Analysis and VITA Assignments Spreadsheets?

A. In many cases, employees clearly fit into specific areas of the organizational shell of VITA, as a large majority of their time is concentrated on activities in a single Due Diligence category. Some employees, however, spread their time across so many categories that they did not clearly fit into one predominant Due Diligence category. VITA will work with you to determine where in the organization these employees will best fit prior to completing the MOA with your agency. At the time of the MOA, a final determination and assignment will be made.

Q. Is the transfer of positions still open for discussion?

A. Based on the due diligence process, approximately 75% of the positions were fairly clearly defined as either VITA or agency functions. The other 25% were not as clear and require further discussion with the agencies. If you have positions that you think have been incorrectly assigned, please let us know as soon as possible. It is important that we move to define the positions quickly and accurately by July 1.

Q. We are being asked to provide a lot of information in a short time-frame. Why is it necessary to continue to update the information when our transition dates are so far away?

A. We are looking to reduce the frequency of updates, as we understand the information requests can be burdensome. We have two drivers for the need for current information. First, we need to take advantage of common infrastructure. Secondly, a current inventory is required for the Operating Plan due to the General Assembly by August 1.

Q. Can contractors and P-14s (wage employees) count toward my agency's FTE obligation to VITA? Do all positions transferred to VITA have to have MEL associated with them?

A. Currently filled contractor and P-14 positions do count toward your agency's FTE obligation to VITA. Naturally, those positions will not have associated MEL.

Q. Is there a timeline for reviewing the MOAs, such as on an annual basis?

A. We have committed to have a plan for when agencies will come on board for the Operating Plan to be presented to the General Assembly by August 1. Before agencies' dates are scheduled, there will be a 60-90 day window during which pre-MOA activities will occur. The model MOA contains provisions for how review will be done, including provisions for dialogue on agency needs and possible changes, and how they impact the MOA. Changes to service can be discussed and reviewed at any time.

Q. My understanding is that if we want additional services not included in our original MOA, another agreement is needed.

A. An MOA amendment will be needed. VITA will work with your agency to arrive at an agreement for the additional services.

Q. Some agencies have MOAs with other agencies. How will these be handled?

A. Services provided via any existing interagency agreements will be taken into account at the time the MOA between VITA and the agency is discussed. As previously committed, VITA services should, at a minimum, be consistent with those interagency agreements.

Standards & Policies

Q. We are in the process of looking at a new systems architecture and have an RFP out. Will VITA be in a position to provide us guidance?

A. Yes. Over time, VITA will also be refining the current Enterprise Architecture over the next year in order to provide more specific guidance to agencies.

Q. Will VITA be accepting agency recommendations on policies?

A. Yes. VITA policies are being developed in collaboration with our customer agencies. Our intent is to move to more common architectures and processes, and we do want input on how to do so in a manner that best supports agencies' business needs.

Q. Where are we in terms of agency Web sites and standardization?

A. The Web site standards and templates were undertaken by VIPNet prior to the legislation establishing VITA. The proposal for determining the rollout of the templates and associated policy, standard, and guideline is pending.

Q. Are all states moving to the dot.gov protocol?

A. Virginia will be the fifth state to adopt the dot.gov protocol for e-mail addressing. The other four states currently using dot.gov in their e-mail addresses are California, Maine, Utah, and Georgia. Approximately 38 states have adopted the dot.gov protocol as one of several ways to reach their state home pages.

Q. Will there be a standard methodology to handle credit card payments?

A. A decision has not yet been made on whether VITA will standardize credit card payments. Basic infrastructure is VITA's first order of business. Enterprise applications and systems will be addressed in subsequent years.

Customer Service

Q. Does VITA view the transition as an equal partnership between VITA and the agencies?

A. Yes. We have mutual interests, including outstanding service delivery and providing as seamless a transition as possible for employees. There is another aspect to this partnership—you (the agencies) are our customers. Visit our VITA website at **http://www.vita.virginia.gov** from July 1st on to read about the five pillars on which we will build and operate VITA – one of the five is "Success through Partnerships" and we are highly focused on this endeavor.

Q. If I currently pay *n* dollars for my existing IT division that is to be transferred to VITA, will I get *n*-dollars-worth of support from VITA?

A. You will get the same or better support and service as you currently receive. The quantity and quality of service will be defined in the metrics included in your MOA. You will also have a designated Service Level Manager who will help be your advocate for consistent and or improved service, help you monitor service levels and help resolve service issues.

Q. The focus has been on the short term. What happens when Governor Warner's administration ends?

A. The General Assembly established the IT Investment Board and charged it with hiring an independent CIO through a five-year contract. As such, the CIO will ensure continuity of leadership across administrations. Considerable effort has been taken to ensure that VITA does not become "the agency to be worked around," including posting all leadership positions throughout the Commonwealth, setting organizational values, and building tools to ensure and measure responsiveness.

Q. How do we avoid additional layers of bureaucracy, which may inhibit speedy responsiveness?

A. VITA is committed to providing the same or better service as you currently receive. Changes will be required within VITA and within agencies to ensure responsiveness. Furthermore, the IT Investment Board will provide additional governance and oversight.

Q. All of our IT resources are being mapped to VITA. Our remaining staff are overloaded and have difficulty understanding technology and how to communicate with a "technology organization." Will VITA help us with our ongoing needs? Do you understand the position we're in?

A. Yes, VITA understands many of the difficulties agencies face, and we are making every effort to partner and work with your agency to meet your ongoing needs. VITA will have Enterprise Services Directors (ESD) who will oversee customer service and

support at the Secretariat level. Your ESD will advocate for your needs and will serve as a point of contact at VITA for communicating business needs. Likewise, each agency has a designated Agency IT Resource (AITR), who is the liaison between your agency and VITA. Because the AITR is the lead business interface, it is appropriate for your AITR to be a non-technical person.

Q. Are there any long-term plans for outsourcing information technology services in the Commonwealth?

A. There are no plans for outsourcing information technology services in the Commonwealth. That said, we cannot take outsourcing off of the table over the long term. On the front end, we do not see any employee layoffs due to outsourcing—we are looking to realize savings by relying on fewer contractors and prefer to invest in improving our in-house skill sets.